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WANT TO INFLUENCE GLOBAL POLICY ON DISABILITY? CALL YOUR SENATOR.

July 17, 2012 by JoLynne Lyon

Urge Senator Lee to support The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and pass it out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to move it forward for a Senate floor vote. Utahans have a unique opportunity to make an impact at this stage in the legislative process as constituents of Senator Lee who is one of 19 Senators on this committee.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Contact Senator Lee by Thursday July 19th with the following message (or something similar):

Senator Mike Lee (R-UT)

(202) 224-5444

Foreign LA: Miriam Harmer (miriam_harmer@lee.senate.gov) OR www.lee.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact

MESSAGE: Identify yourself and your connection to disability (person with a disability, parent of a child with a disability, family member, etc.) then tell your Senator that, "I support ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and as your constituent I request that you support the CRPD at the Committee meeting on July 19, vote in favor of the treaty in Committee, and move it forward to a floor vote in the Senate!"

BACKGROUND on the CRPD

The following information about the CRPD is provided by the United States International Council on Disabilities.

What is the CRPD

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is a treaty that describes the obligations of ratifying countries to promote, protect, fulfill, and ensure the rights of persons with disabilities. The treaty embodies the American ideals that form the basis of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): empowering persons with disabilities to be independent and productive citizens.

What is the history of the CRPD

The United Nations adopted the CRPD in 2006. It was officially open for countries to sign on March 30, 2007. The CRPD "entered into force," meaning that the treaty became law for countries that have ratified it, on May 3, 2008. The US signed the CRPD on July 30, 2009, joining the 141 other signing nations. As of June 2012, the Convention has 114 ratifications and 153 signatures. On May 17, 2012, following almost three years of thorough inter-agency review, the Obama Administration submitted its treaty package to the Senate for its advice and consent for ratification.

Why should the US ratify the CRPD when we have the ADA?

Similar to the ADA, the principles of the CRPD are equal treatment and non-discrimination in access to justice, health, education, employment, and rehabilitation. Through the ADA, the US has made progress toward the goals of inclusion, equal opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for Americans with disabilities. Ratification of the CRPD would present the opportunity for a reaffirmation of these values and provide the forum to advance them worldwide.